

Child Support Recovery Unit

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Purpose	<p>The Child Support Recovery Unit assists custodial parents to receive court-ordered child support payments and assists in determining paternity in non-marital births. Recoveries also assist taxpayers by helping to reimburse government costs for custodial parents who receive public assistance.</p>
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In SFY 2011 CSRU served 651,042 parents and children on 184,955 cases. Of these:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 11 percent receive welfare via Iowa's Family Investment Program (FIP).○ 53 percent formerly received FIP.○ 36 percent never received FIP. These people asked for the state's help in collecting child support and paid a one-time \$25 fee.▪ Number of cases declined about 4 percent compared to SFY10. One reason, beginning August 2010, parents receiving Medicaid have the option, rather than a mandate, to accept services from CSRU. Also, birth rates and out-of-wedlock birth rates have leveled off or declined.▪ Caseloads per worker are up 20 percent in four years as the workforce contracts. There were 455 employees in SFY11 compared to 510 in SFY10 and 564 in FY09.
What	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ In SFY 2011, about 72 percent of collections came from income withholding. A secure website allows employers to electronically transfer funds making it easy to comply with income withholding orders. Also, CSRU maintains a one-stop call center for employers, the Employers Partnering in Child Support (EPICS).▪ CSRU also captures state and federal tax refunds before they go to parents who owe child support. Other collection methods include license sanction, intercept of insurance payments, property liens, contempt of court, passport sanction, and credit bureau reporting.▪ CSRU service is based on the "Connections Equals Collections" approach in which non-custodial parents are encouraged to play an important role in the lives of their children.
How are we doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CSRU collected \$334.3 million in SFY11, down about 1 percent from SFY10. Contributing factors are the sluggish economy, reduced collections from unemployment benefits, and growing caseloads due to staff reductions.▪ About 7 percent of collections go to state and federal governments to offset cost of welfare.▪ CSRU received the Exemplary Employer Website from the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement for creating the site enabling employers to electronically send withheld wages and to report hires/discharges.▪ In FY11, 7,076 paternity orders were established (up 12 percent) and 87 percent of cases had court orders (up 2.5 percentage points). Paternity and child support court orders are the legal basis for collecting child support.▪ In 2009, the most recent year for audited data, the CSRU was ranked 7th in collecting child support in the month due (71 percent).▪ Iowa CSRU received the 2009 Outstanding Program of the Year award from the National Child Support Enforcement Association.